

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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P R 111159Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3349
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 8251

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: LAHORE 890 (NOTAL)

1. MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES DEFUSED THE TENSE SITUATION NOTED REFTTEL BY STATING "BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES" COULD NOT VISIT. AS BHUTTO PLANNED TO DO, THE SHRINE IN LAHORE OLD CITY. THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY A PNA LEADER - CHAUDRI ZAHUR ELAHI - THAT HE ALSO PLANNED TO VISIT THE SHRINE GAVE THE MLA THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACT FIRMLY, BE "EVEN-HANDED", AND REFUSE PERMISSION TO BOTH SIDES. CONGEN LAHORE REPORTS THAT THE LARGE CROWDS WHICH HAD GATHERED IN THE AREA
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WERE DISPERSED LATE WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BY POLICE LATHI CHARGES. PRESS REPORTS NOTE THAT THE PPP ORGANIZED A PROCESSION WHICH FOUGHT WITH POLICE AND WAS BROKEN UP, OUT OF THE OLD CITY, FULLY ARMED ARMY UNITS STATIONED IN THE VICINITY WERE NOT USED.

2. THE EVENING OF AUGUST 10, BHUTTO ADDRESSED FOLLOWERS IN A HOUSE IN LAHORE. THE US WAS AGAIN HIS TARGET, THIS TIME SPECIF-

ICALLY THE PRESIDENT, AND HE STATED THAT "THE BATTLE IS NOT AGAINST THE PNA, IT IS AGAINST AMERICA AND JIMMY CARTER. THE DIGNIFIED AND SELF-RESPECTING PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN WILL FOIL JIMMY CARTER'S CONSPIRACY WHICH HE HATCHED" BECAUSE OF PAKISTAN'S STAND ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND THE REPROCESSING PLANT. HE ASKED HIS PARTY WORKERS TO EMULATE THE "BRAVE VIETNAMESE WHO DEFEATED THE IMPERIALIST POWER".

3. IN OTHER MISCELLANEOUS POLITICAL NOTES, THE AZAD KASHMIR ASSEMBLY WAS DISSOLVED BY PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION ON AUGUST 10, PAVING THE WAY FOR NEW ELECTIONS IN THE STATE SOMETIME IN OCTOBER. IN ONE OF THOSE COMPLEX POLITICAL MANUEVERS WHICH DELIGHT PAKISTANIS, YUSUF KHATTAK, PRESIDENT OF THE FRONTIER PROVINCE QAIYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE ONLY QML MEMBER ELECTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN MARCH ELECTIONS, ANNOUNCED THAT THE QML WAS MERGING WITH THE PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE. THE MERGER WAS IMMEDIATELY DENIED BY THE PACWY'S PRESIDENT WHO DESCRIBED IT AS KHATTAK'S "PERSONAL DECISION".

4. IN A REFRESHING CHANGE, THE PAKISTAN TIMES CARRIES AN ARTICLE ON AUGUST 11 OP-ED PAGE, SINGED "RECORDER", TITLED A FACTUAL STUDY OF THE ELECTION CRISIS AND THE WESTERN MEDIA. ARTICLE QUOTES EDITORIALS SUPPORTING BHUTTO WHICH APPEARED IN THE WASHINGTON POST, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE AND THE LONDON TIMES, AMONG OTHERS, TO PROVE THAT, CONTRARY TO WHAT THE PPP HAS SAID, THE WESTERN PRESS WAS NOT ONE OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE SUPPOSED CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSPIRACY AGAINST PAKISTAN.

5. CONGEN KARACHI REPORTS THAT ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THE MLA ARRESTED SEVERAL HIGH LEVEL SIND PROVINCE PPP LEADERS, INCLUDING TWO FORMER PROVINCIAL CABINET MINISTERS AND THE SIND PPP SECRETARY GENERAL, WITHIN THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS. PPP SOURCES HAVE TOLD THE CONSULATE THAT NUMEROUS SUPPORTERS OF FORMER FEDERAL LABOR MINISTER GABOL HAVE BEEN DETAINED IN KARACHI. BOTH THE PRESS AND THE POLITICAL GRAPEVINE REPORT ARRESTS OF PPP OFFICIALS AND WORKERS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE PROVINCE. KARACHI CONCLUDES THAT A FEELING IS GROWING AMONG PPP ELEMENTS THAT THE MLA CANNOT BE RELIED ON TO HONOR ITS PROMISE OF IMPARTIALITY. HUMMEL

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